JAYWALK

RECLAIMING STOLEN IDENTITIES

MORE THAN FRYBREAD

ISSUE I

ACE

BACKGROUND

In the 19th century, Native Americans created a food called frybread using the meager rations provided by the US government. By creating a more filling dish when food was scarce, they increased their chances of surviving their persecution. While each tribe developed its own unique recipe, over time, all frybread became synonymous with survival and resilience.

Over 100 miles from the nearest reservation, centuries of oppression have manifested in the Native communities in Minneapolis and St. Paul, leading to high levels of addiction and violence. As the birthplace of the American Indian Movement (AIM), the city's American Indian Cultural Corridor has been a focal point for Indigenous people working to overcome these forces for decades.

The Cultural Corridor, and more specifically Little Earth of United Tribes, a low-income housing community in the East Phillips neighborhood of south Minneapolis, serves as a microcosm of the obstacles facing Natives across the nation. Meanwhile, Little Earth also serves as an example of how Natives are pushing back. Familiar with overdoses, high crime rates and low graduation rates, its residents have turned to tradition, spirituality and community to not only survive but to live.

"We've been through so much. It's in our DNA and our everyday lives," said Kelly Morgan, a member of the East Phillips Improvement Coalition Board. "This perseverance and resilience are about staying alive, no matter what we do to our bodies and minds."

It was the government that forced their families off their land and put their ancestors in boarding schools, unapologetically stripping them of their Native identities. Now, decades later, they are striving to restore their cultural heritage and reclaim their past.

FRONT COVER *The top of the TeePee that teacher Gary Spears' students from the Nawayee Center School constructed to begin decolonizing Sibley Park on June 11, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Spears plans to rename the park Cánté Tiza Wiyan (Strong Heart Women) after getting approval from local city councils.*

PREVIOUS PAGE *Willie (Osha Wisko Miigwaan) builds a fire to heat up stones for the evening's sweat lodge on June 13, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is supposed to cover the stones completely as they heat up. During the ceremony, the firekeeper will add new stones to the pile in the sweat lodge during each door (intermission period). Sweat lodges are key in helping Indigenous people find balance in their lives. Just blocks south of US Bank Stadium and downtown Minneapolis, the sweat lodge is located behind the Anishinabe Wakiagun (The People's Home) Housing Complex in the American Indian Cultural Corridor.*

RIGHT *Priscilla wears a clown outfit while the Camp Good News Ministry Circus visits Little Earth on July 30, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

CHAPTER I

THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

Southeast Minneapolis, Minnesota

The onramp to Hiawatha Avenue, next to the Little Earth Community on June 6, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

RELOCATION

the origins of the cultural corridor

By the 20th century, two hundred years of forced treaties and wars had driven Indigenous tribes off their land. After the US-Dakota War of 1862, Minnesota expelled the Dakota, the prominent Indigenous people of the region, from their land. Many were relocated to reservations, while policies like the Dawes Act of 1887 and the Curtis Act of 1898 aimed to assimilate Native Americans by dividing communal lands and suppressing tribal governance. Indian boarding schools sought to erase Native cultures and identities throughout the country. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 attempted to reverse some damage by restoring tribal lands and promoting self-governance.

In 1956, the Indian Relocation Act was enacted by the federal government, aiming to assimilate American Indians by relocating them from reservations to major cities. This initiative brought predominantly Ojibwe and Dakota people to Minneapolis, significantly altering the city's demographic and cultural landscape. These new residents began to establish their own communities, creating a unique urban environment that would grow and evolve over the following decades.

To address issues like poverty, discrimination, and cultural dislocation that stemmed from urban migration, Native Americans began forming communities and establishing organizations. In the summer of 1968, Russell Means, Dennis Banks and Clyde Bellecourt founded the American Indian Movement (AIM) in a basement in south Minneapolis. In the years following its founding, AIM worked to make Franklin Avenue safer by closing bars, pornographic shops, and liquor stores along the street. Originally formed to address local issues, AIM rapidly gained national prominence for its advocacy and activism, becoming a crucial force in the fight for Native rights and justice.

"There was a lot of police brutality taking place where the police would take our people, arrest them here all drunk, take them down to the river or wherever they wanted to and beat them up," longtime East Phillips resident and Make Voting A Tradition Coordinator Jolene Jones said.

Now one of the nation's oldest urban Indian centers, the Minneapolis Regional Native American Center (eventually renamed the Minneapolis American Indian Center) opened in 1975 on Franklin Avenue.

Mabel makes frybread in her home on July 9, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. "After everything happened, my mom was the only one in the community who made it," Mabel said. "I want to keep that traditional alive."

In hosting many public events and regional basketball tournaments, it quickly became a cornerstone of the community. Its presence, along with other important landmarks, underscored the growing cultural and social infrastructure supporting the Native population in Minneapolis.

Today, Franklin Avenue, now a bustling hub of cultural and social activity, is a central part of the Indian Cultural Corridor. The area stands as a testament to cultural perseverance and community strength. However, it also faces significant challenges, including rising homelessness and drug addiction, exacerbated by the ongoing fentanyl and heroin crisis.

"The avenue, as they call it, was quite different many years ago and made this transition of being really, really rough to much better," said resident and East Phillips Improvement Coalition board member Kelly Morgan. "And now we're kind of going the other way today, with the issues that are complicating the avenue due to the unsheltered and the addiction and the way that the city keeps pushing them out of camps and onto Franklin Ave."

Many local organizations attempt to combat issues that trouble the community. Local groups, such as the Native American Community Clinic, the Native American Community Development Institute and the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, actively address these issues and support the community. Their efforts highlight the ongoing need for adaptation and support in the face of complex social challenges.

In addition to the many help centers that opened around Franklin Avenue, the 1970s saw the opening of a new housing community that would become entwined with the identity of the cultural corridor: Little Earth.

TOP-RIGHT *Cyndy Mountain does her daughter Nola's hair before the Grand Entry for the 3rd Annual Two Spirit Powwow on July 13, 2024, at South High School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Two Spirit Native Americans are Indigenous members of the LGBTQ+ community who are believed to have both a masculine and feminine spirit.*

BOTTOM-RIGHT *Ralph Papequash investigates a broken window at Powwow Grounds Coffee Shop before fixing it on July 10, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. According to Thomas Earley, a barista who has worked there for several years, a homeless member of the community threw a rock on the night of St. Patrick's Day.*

LEFT *Rayma plays in the grass while her grandmother, Julie, cooks Indian Tacos on June 9, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Julie and her family started selling traditional Frybread Indian Tacos to the community as a way to pay for college tuition several years ago.*

CHAPTER II

LITTLE EARTH

The only native-preference housing community in the U.S.

The sun shines through firework smoke in Cluster 7 of Little Earth on July 4, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

THE HISTORY

the founding of little earth

In 1971, $4.5 million from various local organizations, including the Minnesota Council of Churches, helped kickstart the construction of a new low-income, subsidized housing community. This project also received partial funding from the Federal Model Cities program in 1966. The groundbreaking ceremony in 1971 was a significant event, marked by Hoka Hey Singing and drumming. It took place on the site of the old South High School in East Phillips.

The housing community officially opened in 1973, taking applications from people of all races and ethnicities. Amidst rising rates of police brutality, then-East Phillips resident Debbie Peterson approached AIM's Dennis Banks in 1975 about transforming The South High Housing Project into a community for Native Americans. AIM supported the idea and held a contest to rename the community, combining the names of two winners, a child and an elder, to create the name Little Earth of United Tribes.

AIM struggled to secure additional funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to address issues caused by poor workmanship. As HUD declined further investment, the property began to deteriorate. By 1982, nearly half of the units were empty, and Little Earth faced foreclosure.

In response, Little Earth United Tribes Inc. filed a lawsuit against HUD, initiating an 11-year legal battle. During this time, Little Earth was placed into receivership, with a court-appointed manager overseeing the property. The decline in property conditions was severe; most of the area was covered in dirt, with barely any grass left. Due to dissatisfaction with the lack of Native leadership, residents established the Little Earth Residents Association (LERA) in November 1983. Following a series of poor ownership experiences, Lori Ellis and other residents created the Indian Housing Authority. Minneapolis refused to recognize it.

Amid these struggles, the community's resilience was evident. Despite the ongoing challenges, residents continued to advocate for better living conditions and greater autonomy. This perseverance bore fruit when, after Little Earth lost their lawsuit, newly appointed HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros approached Clyde Bellecourt to discuss helping transfer Little Earth to Native control.

In 1994, Sec. Cisneros facilitated new rules allowing Little Earth to apply Indian preference for its residents. This preference was not exclusive but allowed the community to prioritize Native American residents, helping to preserve its cultural identity. Sec. Cisneros also signed Little Earth over to LEUTCH, a board of directors composed of four LERA Board Members and five outside members. LEUTCH continues to own Little Earth today and has since introduced a management team to help facilitate the property

"With LEUTCH, LERA's job is to make sure that we don't lose our property and that resident voices are being heard," LERA Board Member Jolene Jones said.

Today, 1,500 residents from 39 different tribes live at Little Earth houses, reflecting a rich cultural tapestry and a strong sense of community. Little Earth remains the only Indigenous-preference project-based Section 8 rental assistance community in the U.S., with half of its residents under 21 and many units reporting annual incomes below $10,000.

Daniella plays with a bicycle tire before getting a plate of food left over from a graduation celebration on June 30, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

JORDAN TOVIN

TOP-LEFT *Margaret shows Robin the news that Leonard Peltier was denied parole at Elder Bingo, hosted by LERA, on July 2, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Since being in jail for decades, Peltier has become a symbol for the fight against police brutality in the Native community.*

BOTTOM-LEFT *Margaret prepares the pancake mix for the all you can eat Elder Breakfast in the Little Earth Gym on July 26, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. All of the proceeds from the breakfast will go towards elder programming and better bingo prizes.*

RIGHT *Margaret holds her grandson, Benjamin, as he falls asleep in her home on July 23, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Margaret pulled Benjamin from daycare for the day to take him to Elder Bingo.*

LITTLE EARTH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Different from the finance office, the Little Earth Residents Association (LERA) handles the supportive services and community programming. Resident and food-shelf volunteer Elaine Stately started organizing LERA in 1983. Going door-to-door, Stately and others like Peggy Bellecourt brought the community together to stand against the expansion of the Hiawatha Corridor. The community demanded and won the huge concrete sound barrier along Little Earth's eastern boundary when construction commenced in the late 1980s.

LERA also runs religious programming for Little Earth residents. Rianna Downwind serves as LERA's Cultural Coordinator. She leans on her background as Midewiwin to hold spiritual gatherings and ceremonies for the community. Some of her other duties include obtaining healing herbs for the community, organizing sweat ceremonies at the Little Earth Sweat Lodge.

One of the unique services LERA offers elders specifically is help with transportation. In doing so while also holding weekly programs like Bingo and Community Coffee Hour, LERA plays a role in helping elders of the community get out of their home and engaged with their community.

"[Little Earth] was designed to be a stepping stone," Housing Advocacy Program Manager Cathee Vick said. "But many of the folks have found a home and want to stay. So not everyone wants to move on. But we're really just helping our community members in Little Earth thrive in any way we can."

LERA also offers credit counseling and education to help residents transition from renting to owning homes. The organization also provides support services to address generational trauma and assist with personal and educational challenges. In 1994, Little Earth purchased the Holy Rosary school building in the middle of the 2400 block of 18th Avenue and opened the Little Earth Neighborhood Early Learning Center to be run by LERA. In running the farm, Elder community events and the Youth Development Center, LERA aims at pushing residents forward.

Daniel films his friend shooting fireworks in Cluster 2 of Little Earth on July 3, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, anticipating that it might rain on July 4.

Ollie grabs handfuls of his second watermelon while competing in the Little Earth Watermelon Eating Contest at the National Night Out on August 6, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER

sculpting the next generation of city natives

The Youth Development Center (YDC) at LERA has served the area for over 20 years. Its origins trace back to a simple computer room aimed at adult education, but it has since expanded into a multifaceted program addressing the broader needs of the community, particularly focusing on children and teenagers.

The YDC offers a variety of programs designed to support youth in multiple aspects of their lives. The After-School Program provides mentoring, tutoring, and life skills training. It aims to empower youth to succeed both academically and personally by offering structured support outside of school hours. Teens are offered opportunities to gain work experience and develop skills through the workforce development program, which runs throughout the summer.

"To me, you don't have to be a product of your environment," LERA Youth Empowerment Director Latisha Icemen said. "Even though they think they're having fun, we're teaching them basic skills and that confidence to say I can go out and be whatever I want to be and I don't have to just settle."

During the summer, the YDC operates from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., providing breakfast, lunch, dinner and a range of activities. This program ensures that children and teens have a safe and engaging environment during the long summer days.

"Once there were these kids that went to a nearby garden and stole all the tomatoes," LERA Counseling Program Coordinator Jonas Kazlauskas said. "Then they brought them to the side of the road and were just throwing them at cars. It's because they were bored."

YDC staff members work within schools to provide direct support to students, assist teachers, and bridge the gap between school and home life. This involvement includes home visits and communication with social workers to address specific needs. The center also helps families with essential items such as laundry soap, gift cards for clothing, and bus cards.

Mario rides back from archery on June 18, 2024, in Northdale, Minnesota. The Boys and Girls Club at Little Earth has weekly activities during the summer to keep kids engaged while away from school.

JORDAN TOVIN

THE URBAN FARM

combating food insecurity through community education

Over the summer, 52 kids participated in the garden program, working two hours a day. Through tasks like planting, weeding, and harvesting, they learn about farming while earning money for back-to-school shopping. Each child makes $500, with $300 earmarked for school supplies, $100 for a family event, and $100 for personal use.

While the younger children work in the garden, teens help maintain various plants and trees around the Little Earth property. Several female residents initially started the farm. The farm has a youth Workforce Development program, aiming to teach the kids responsibility, community engagement, and financial earning. It also has programming aimed at reducing A1C levels for people with diabetes, renewable energy innovation, and social justice impact.

Chad was let go from LERA after expressing frustration over plans to construct a hydroponic farming facility, called 'The Innovation Hub,' on the property's southeast corner. Since his departure, other LERA staff members like Jonas Kazlauskas and Michelle White have taken over the direction of the garden education programs.

Before leaving, Chad began breeding schools of Yellow Perch at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center to inhabit the future innovation hub. In doing so, he employed several interns and students who helped him upkeep the fish. Since Chad's departure from Little Earth, Kieran Smith, the PhD student who has been in charge of taking care of the fish said, "[their] plans remain the same: to use the Yellow Perch to help support and build the capacity of aquaculture based food-fish production in Minnesota." Meanwhile, these particular fish will no longer be included in the planned hydroponic farm.

LEFT *Chad Hebert helps plow a garden bed to plant carrots at the Little Earth Garden on June 24, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. During his time at Little Earth, Chad devoted several hours each day during the summer to educating young Little Earth residents about the importance of various crops as well as how to upkeep the farm and the environment.*

TOP-RIGHT *Old tobacco plants lay to dry while Chad mows the grass in the Little Earth Garden before his workers arrive on the morning of July 16, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

BOTTOM-RIGHT *Malin Anderson and Madison Bell remove the excess food from a Yellow Perch tank at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center on July 11, 2024, in St. Paul, Minnesota.*

CHAPTER III

THE OBSTACLES

The omnipresent, lasting effects of the past

Carmen plays on monkey bars at Cedar Field Park while a woman overdoses on the basketball court on July 19, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Samantha stares at the remnants of a shooting in the parking lot of the Youth Development Center on July 28, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

ROADBLOCKS

the culmination of centuries worth of oppression

Serving as a microcosm of the broader Indigenous community, the Native Community in Little Earth grapples with a range of profound historical challenges, including poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, absenteeism among parents, mental and physical health issues, chronic school absenteeism and dropouts, domestic abuse, substance abuse, crime, and generational trauma.

Despite regulations prohibiting firearms on Little Earth property, gun violence persists, largely stemming from nonresidents, according to Little Earth leaders. From June to August 2024, LERA transportation vans were targeted in two separate shootings, with one bullet hitting a YDC classroom window. No one was killed in either incident.

The community also faces severe challenges related to drug use. As a result of businesses fearing usage in their restrooms, only two public restrooms are available in East Phillips: at the Minneapolis American Indian Center and the East Phillips Park Recreation Center, known by some in the area as the "Cockroach" Center. Despite Minnesota's participation in needle exchange programs designed to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne diseases, residents say they must remain vigilant to avoid discarded needles.

On June 24, the city began renovations on the Cedar Avenue Bridge, a known hotspot for drug use. In East Phillips, needle disposal boxes are tied to telephone poles and bridges to discourage needle

Carmen drinks a bottle of Mountain Dew while her friends enjoy Blue Takis and pizza outside the Little Earth Office on July 28, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In reward for finding bullets and a handgun and turning them into security following a shooting, the officers ordered Carmen and her friends pizza and soda.

"historical trauma is the cumulative, multigenerational, collective experience of emotional and psychological injury in communities and in descendants."

— Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

littering. At Little Earth, some homes have purple ribbons tied to the door handles, indicating that a Narcan-trained person lives there. Little Earth Management (LEM) is also on a 24/7 standby for wellness checks, in case there's concern of overdose or danger.

People in the Little Earth community say there is a complex relationship with the Christian groups that come into their neighborhood. While community members say they know the intention is often to offer support and aid, they also feel a sense of imposition on their spiritual identity. As Naomi Bullchild articulates, "I don't know how much they take into account that we already have our own teachers, our own religion. We're all spiritualists."

Naomi further explains, "They've always tried to push that on us. And you kind of just push it off in a way like let them talk, let them say their thing." She feels a persistent imposition that creates a barrier, making it difficult for some in the community to fully embrace the help offered by these groups, as it often feels like an attempt to convert rather than simply assist.

Meanwhile, members of the community like Jolene Jones feel that the biggest obstacle for Little Earth is how the media never focus on the positive aspects of the community.

"I feel like our biggest problem is the press," Jones said. "The only time they come is when something negative happens. Time and time again, they only want to show up to air our dirty laundry, our bad things that happen, and I think that's the biggest obstacle."

Throughout the summer, only two other members of the media walked onto property. One was a journalist, Susan Du, doing a story on the use of biochar for the Star Tribune, who mistakenly thought the Little Earth Urban Farm was using it, and the other was a Youtuber by the name of Tommy G., who spent half a day on the property making a video centered around how dangerous Little Earth is.

"What people don't see is how this community rallies together when shit happens," Jones said. "I just did not like [the video]. I didn't. I don't think it was a true representation of our community."

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSEVERANCE

The power of culture and community

Willie (Osha Wisko Miigwaan) helps build a longhouse for large community spiritual gatherings on June 13, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

LEFT *Leroy Shabaiash spreads tobacco in Bde Maka Ska Lake while at a Sobriety Warriors Picnic on June 23, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Native Americans often spread tobacco as an offering to their creator and ancestors.*

TOP-RIGHT *Members of the Sobriety Warriors wait for others to show up for Drum Night on June 25, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Every Tuesday night, the Sobriety Warriors meet with each other to learn Hoka-Hey Singing and Drumming. Allowing the drum to heat up in the sun and getting rid of any moisture is essential to having a correctly-tuned drum.*

BOTTOM-RIGHT *Women from a sobriety house in East Phillips spend time at Bde Maka Ska Lake on June 23, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

SOBRIETY WARRIORS

achieving sobriety through culture and community

When Nicole Mason was working at LERA in March 2022, she started a sobriety group. During a Sweat Lodge ceremony, Ojibwe language holder Joseph Sutherland gave the group the name "Sobriety Warriors," symbolizing their commitment to sobriety and recovery. Initially, the group held local meetings and quickly expanded their activities. Early initiatives included attending events like the NA Pig Roast at Apple River, which provided a sense of community and healing. These experiences highlighted the need for similar opportunities within their community.

"Our goal is to get as many people that want to go to ceremony or powwows to be able to go, without having to struggle financially while in their recovery," Mason said. "We're trying to make sure that our people don't have to struggle, especially when they already struggled with their addiction."

Operating as a grassroots organization, Sobriety Warriors rely on community fundraising and direct support, eschewing grant money. The group's approach emphasizes community generosity to meet needs such as gas, food, and travel expenses. With over 50 active members, Sobriety Warriors provide a robust support network, ensuring that no one faces recovery alone. Personal experiences with addiction and recovery continue to shape the group's approach.

"We're out here to get every single Native person in addiction into recovery as well," Mason said. "We have this solid group, so as our Native people come into recovery, they know where to come."

Looking ahead, the Sobriety Warriors aim to continue fostering community, healing and cultural pride among members, turning personal struggles into positive community contributions. Their journey exemplifies the power of community, tradition and resilience in the path to recovery, offering hope and support to those seeking a better future.

THE PROTECTORS

how east phillips natives are protecting their own community

In the wake of George Floyd's death, Little Earth saw the birth of a new community safety initiative known as the "Little Earth Protectors." This grassroots group emerged during a period of widespread unrest. Members of the group say they formed out of necessity during the absence of police presence in the early days of the protests. The Protectors, composed of dozens of dedicated members, say they stepped up to ensure their predominantly Native American community remained safe amidst chaos.

The initiative was spurred by citywide curfew alerts, which triggered a deep sense of urgency and fear among residents. The Protectors quickly established themselves as a vital component of the neighborhood's defense, taking on roles traditionally filled by police. Their efforts included setting curfews, disrupting drug trafficking and mediating disputes, showcasing a proactive and community-centered approach to safety. This model of community-led intervention resonated with many residents who had long felt that traditional policing was inadequate for their specific needs. The Protectors' ability to address local issues directly and effectively furthered the argument for exploring alternative models of public safety.

Years later, the Protectors continue to gather under the Cedar Avenue Bridge on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. On the last Sunday of every month, they also provide meals for the neighborhood. Jolene and Marci, two elders, monitor the radios. Marci records the radio updates in a journal, marking which "clusters" of homes are clear, while Jolene helps communicate with those out on patrol, overseeing Cedar Avenue and the parking lot in front of the Little Earth Offices. Recently, Many Shields, an organization that helps Indigenous men protect their community, has begun to assist the Protectors, forming the Indigenous Protectors Movement.

However, the Protectors' journey is not without its hurdles. Incidents of violence, including the shooting of a member, underscore the dangers associated with community-led safety initiatives. Nevertheless, the Little Earth Protectors' experience illustrates a significant shift towards localized, community-driven approaches to safety. Their story highlights the potential benefits of blending community engagement with formal law enforcement, aiming for a more nuanced and responsive model of public safety that addresses the unique needs of neighborhoods in transition.

Jolene Jones and the other Protectors wait for the first round to return before eating tacos while sitting under the Cedar Avenue Bridge on June 8, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

SUCCESS STORIES

abandoning a past life to flip over a new leaf

Rodger Roan Eagle prepares his sweet grass so he can smudge his newly made dream catchers in his home on June 30, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Smudging is a ritual that involves using the smoke of a burning herb to cleanse a person, place or thing of negative energy. Roan Eagle attributes his sobriety to making dream catchers, believing that anyone can change.

Rodger Roan Eagle used to bounce between Denver, Seattle and Minneapolis as a drug dealer. After seeing his three siblings pass away from alcoholism and drug addictions, he realized he wanted to change. "When my sister died, I saw something that I didn't want to get back into," Roan Eagle said.

"At the time, I was a bad person," Roan Eagle continued. "I was [on] drugs and alcohol. I was a gangster, a drug dealer. I was doing all that bad stuff, and I wanted to change my ways."

Upon moving back to Minneapolis, he began working at the Minneapolis American Indian Center and making dreamcatchers as an outlet. While working there as security, he met his now fiancée, Melanie. When not working, both of them take time daily to work on their art. While Rodger completes dreamcatchers in the living room, Melanie sews skirts and jackets in the room over.

This spirit of creativity and dedication is echoed throughout the Little Earth community, where many residents find unique ways to contribute and support each other. Another resident, Derek Beauchamp, channels his energy into a different kind of craft.

While the Little Earth Sewing Group is a haven for many crafting and mending textiles, Derek works on his own unique projects. Among the room full of sewing machines, Derek Beauchamp spends his time modifying toy car batteries and parts. During one week, he was working on the battery circuitry for a miniature toy Corvette for his grandson. "I didn't have a father growing up, so I want to be there for him," Beauchamp shared.

Beauchamp's grandson has a collection of toy cars, including a Corvette, a Bronco and a Lamborghini. Beauchamp dedicates his time to modifying them, ensuring they are as exciting as possible for his grandson. Whether it is preparing a higher voltage battery to make the toy Corvette go faster or adding a new Bluetooth stereo system, his meticulous work and dedication to these projects highlight his desire to provide his grandson with the joy and support he lacked in his own childhood. The lack of support in Beauchamp's youth sent him down a path of addiction and violence — landing him in jail on several occasions.

"I want to make sure he has a father there for him because I never did," Beauchamp said.

One day, while working on another part for another car, Beauchamp exclaimed, "Yes! Another sale. More money for a new car." He had sold a beading piece that he spent the previous week making to get money for a new toy car. Over the course of the summer, Beauchamp bought several new cars for his grandson, making

Beauchamp and his grandson examine the trees outside their apartment on July 19, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

modifications to them all.

Just as Derek channels his creativity to build a better future for his grandson, another resident, James Demo, has faced his own struggles and is now focused on creating a positive life for his family. Demo grew up in Little Earth, where he was exposed to illicit substances from a young age. After his father's death, he moved in with his grandmother, who struggled with mental health issues and addiction.

Demo's early exposure to drugs was largely shaped by his grandmother. "My grandma was really, really abusive," he said. "She struggled with mental health issues and was bad with pills. That's where my drug use started." From that point, drugs consumed his life.

When Demo turned 18, he dropped out of high school and received a large sum of money from a civil suit. "It went really bad," he admitted. "I got heavily into pills, and when the money ran out, I turned to heroin."

His lifestyle soon became a cycle of acquiring drugs and engaging in criminal activities to support his habit. He found himself stealing cars, shoplifting and participating in robberies. Despite the moral dilemmas and dangerous situations, addiction overshadowed any feelings of guilt or remorse.

Throughout these years, Demo's family played a significant role. His grandmother, a former addict herself, and his mother made repeated efforts to steer him towards sobriety. Despite multiple rehab stints and incarcerations, Demo struggled to break free from addiction. His family's attempts often seemed in vain, as the compulsion to use overshadowed any desire to stay clean.

The birth of his twins marked a turning point. Living in a tent, his partner went into premature labor while Demo was out procuring drugs. The twins were born addicted, a painful reality that hit Demo hard. Seeing his bruised and fragile newborns in the hospital was a profound moment of reckoning for him.

Throughout these trials, Demo's family remained a steadfast support system. His aunt, actively involved in the community, and his mother provided a network of care and intervention. Their efforts, combined with Demo's growing realization of the need to change for his children's sake, gradually influenced his journey towards recovery. As of 2024, Demo is over three years sober, and he serves his community by working at Powwow Grounds Coffee Shop on Franklin Avenue.

Demo gets his kids, K'lea and James IIIrd as they leave the Bloomington Family Aquatic Center on August 2, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

NATIVE EDUCATION

teaching culture to the next generation

Physical Education teacher Gary Spears, along with his students and coworkers from the Nawayee Center School located in East Phillips, put up a pole while constructing a TeePee in Sibley Park on June 11, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Spears plans to rename the park Cánté Tiza Wiyan (Strong Heart Women) after obtaining approval from local city councils.

Dakhóta iápi Okhódakičhiye (DIO) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization of Dakota community members, language learners and speakers. Founded in 2014, DIO addresses the need for accessible Dakota language learning materials, promoting language revitalization through resources for home, community and classroom use.

DIO members have extensive experience in Dakota language education and collaborate on various projects. They host weekend language immersion camps, along with many other educational, community and family events. LERA Teen Recovery Coach Eileen Bass brought part of her Little Earth Wellbriety team to one of these weekends. According to their website, Wellbriety is an Indigenous movement with the mission of "disseminating culturally based principles, values and teachings to support healthy community development and servant leadership and to support healing from alcohol, substance abuse, co-occurring disorders and intergenerational trauma."

During the camp, the teens learned about Native plants, traditional foods and the importance of bison while expanding their Dakota vocabulary. The camp, led by Šišóka Dúta and his team, incorporated conversational exercises throughout the weekend, as well as physical activities like hikes and a Bison Safari.

"A lot of times, language instruction happens in the classroom, and people are reluctant to use it outside the classroom," said Šišóka Dúta. "We're trying to have events outside the classroom to show that language learning isn't just something you do at school."

Meanwhile, teens attend other schools and programs during the school year that incorporate Native culture and tradition into the curriculum. Nawayee Center School is an alternative urban high school in Minneapolis serving American Indian youth in grades 7 through 12. The school provides a transformative education grounded in Indigenous tradition, to help students stay connected to their cultural roots while receiving a robust academic education. With small classes and a culturally focused curriculum, Nawayee offers a supportive environment for students who have faced challenges in traditional public schools, aligning with its mission to foster a love of learning and promote excellence in Indigenous education.

The school's curriculum blends accredited junior and senior high school classes with Indigenous knowledge and practices. Its Medicine Wheel health program addresses mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health, embodying a holistic approach to education. Students engage in various culturally relevant activities, such as beadwork, drum group, and Indigenous language classes, to instill pride and identity. Leadership development and enrichment opportunities, including field trips, outdoor learning, and paid internships, are integral to the student experience.

Located in the heart of the Native American community, the school's facilities include classrooms, administrative offices, a common room, and a garden for outdoor education. The environment reflects Native American culture, with murals created by students and spaces for cultural activities. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Nawayee Center School relies on community donations and volunteers to support its mission. Over its 40-year history, the school has exemplified excellence in Indigenous education, providing a nurturing environment for students to thrive academically and culturally.

Shilo Deer and other Little Earth attendees of the Dakhóta iápi Okhódakichiye Dakota Language Immersion Camp go on a hike to learn about native medicinal and herbal plants at the Belwin Conservancy in Afton, Minnesota, on August 3, 2024.

ISSUE I

In spending a summer in Minneapolis for an internship with CBS, I was looking for a long-term project, already having done some preliminary research on the area. After two days of walking miles around the city exploring different neighborhoods, I finally decided to visit the great Mall of America. While sitting on the blue line light rail, I sat across from a woman with a "Native Pride" tattoo on her calf. I asked her about it, trying to learn more about the Native Community in the Twin Cities. Trying to be politically correct in articulating that initial question, I realize that in retrospect, I probably just sounded like an idiot. Nonetheless, she told me, "go to Franklin Avenue and Little Earth. You'll find everything you need to know there."

For every day of the following two months, I explored the area known as the American Indian Cultural Corridor and met various community members. This issue is dedicated to encapsulating Little Earth, which serves as a cross section of a multitude of Indigenous tribes. The work introduces the many obstacles they have continued to face into the modern era as they look to heal from their past and integrate their culture into their city lives.

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Chi Miigwech & Wopida

BACKGROUND

In 2024, I created **JAYWALK** as a way to self publish my long-form, documentary-reportage visual journalism. Now that many newspapers no longer have the budget nor space to support long term documentary projects, I created the magazine to publish my stories as intended. Combining photographs, research, interviews and personal experiences, I created this magazine in an attempt to ensure that the voices and stories of those I document are given the space and depth they deserve.

Images made between June and August of 2024 for CBS affiliate station WCCO in Minneapolis, M.N.

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RIGHT *The Little Earth gym on June 14, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

BACK COVER *A young girl peeks through her door after curfew on June 8, 2024, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. During the school year, the elders try to enforce a curfew so the kids get enough rest.*

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No Solicitors
Beware of Dog